

Origins

THE FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM NEWSLETTER

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Instructor Spotlight: Chi Jang Yin



“Film and Photography in the Nuclear Age” uses film and photography artifacts as critical tools to understand the development of the Atomic Bomb and the infrastructure of the Manhattan Project. It also decodes how these mediums served as documents of analysis and expression during and after the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Students examine the public response to the ever-present threat of the use of nuclear power during the Cold War period as recorded through 20th-century media technologies.

This course works well as a Focal Point Seminar because it encourages students to develop their ideas and construct strong critical arguments using historical materials. The class format encourages safe, open and respectful dialogue and lively debates on complex issues: Should the scientists have stopped working once they realized the true



destructive force of nuclear weapons? Were political circumstances or scientific ambition more to blame for the use of nuclear power? Is nuclear war a possibility in our future? Will The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) be able to provide security for global citizens? Using a reading list that includes

formal film analysis, aesthetic theory, physics, and biographies of nuclear scientists, we discuss the limits of film and photography as tools of documentation and debate whether these mediums are ever able to objectively and realistically portray the complex moral issues of nuclear weapon programs.

By the end of the quarter, students are able to write analytical papers with deep insight; logical and empathetic in their examination of nuclear issues through the lens of photographers, filmmakers and their subjects. It is gratifying to see how students mature as critical thinkers in the first year at DePaul.

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From the Director

We are now well into Spring Quarter, with a full list of Focal Point Seminars being taught, including some first-time classes:

- ♦ “Abraham Lincoln in Film” (Mark Pohlad)
- ♦ “The Cuban Missile Crisis” (Felix Masud-Piloto)
- ♦ “Domestic Workers in the U.S. Economy & Beyond” (Carolina Sternberg)
- ♦ “Global Warming & the Media” (Mark Potosnak)
- ♦ “Greenwich Village, 1913” (Amy Tyson)
- ♦ “Hawaii: Kingdom, Territory, State” (Lori Pierce)
- ♦ “Panic & Crash! Understanding Economic Crises” (Nathan Leahy)
- ♦ “Run Forrest Run” (Casey Bowles)
- ♦ “The World of the Maya” (Elizabeth Martinez)

Some additional announcements:

- Chicago Quarter instructors: The Discover Vincentian Inservice Day, on Friday, April 25 (this Friday), has been shortened and you can still participate if you RSVP by Wednesday (4/23). From 12:30-1 p.m., Fr. Chris Robinson will give a tour of St. Vincent de Paul Parish, sharing its history (“the little seminary under the L”). Then from 1:15-2:30, there will be a luncheon at Homeslice, just down the street at 938 W. Webster, for a discussion about resources, best practices, and challenges of integrating DePaul’s mission into Chicago Quarter classes. To sign up, email Maria Hernandez by Wednesday at mhernand@depaul.edu.
- The Chicago History Museum is sponsoring a weekend (May 3-4) of Chicago historical trips which may be of interest, either in prepping for your Chicago Quarter class or for your own interest: www.chicagohistory.org/chicago24/schedule.html

- Autumn 2014 Chicago Quarter instructors: Please plan to attend our annual Best Practices conference for Chicago Quarter teaching teams. This year’s Best Practices should be a good one, with break-out sessions and a first-ever Info Fair. **Attendance is expected.** It will take place in the Lincoln Park Student Center on Friday, May 30, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with registration at 9:15. Lunch is included.
- Fr. Ed Udovic, who teaches the Explore Chicago class, “The Lincoln Park Neighborhood: Then and Now,” will present “Lincoln Park Neighborhood History: Bringing Collections On Line” at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 8, in McGowan South in The LPC. A reception begins at 6:30 and admission is free.
- As you know, the Teaching Commons has year-round workshops. One that seems especially well suited to teaching first-year students is “Uncovering Students’ Hidden Learning,” offered May 15 in the Loop and May 16 in Lincoln Park. Here is a full schedule of their offerings:

teachingcommons.depaul.edu/Workshops_Events/workshops.html

—Doug Long

Important Dates!

- Friday, May 9: Focal Point Seminar Faculty Chat, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Richardson Library Rosati Room 300, LPC
- Wednesday, May 21: First-Year Program Writing Showcase, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Cortelyou Commons
- Friday, May 30: Chicago Quarter Best Practices, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Student Center 120. Check-in at 9:15.